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SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-second year

Letter dated 27 May 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement issued on 25 May 1997 by the Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Mr. Gohar Ayub Khan, on the decision by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to recognize the new Government of the Islamic State of Afghanistan (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 39, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ahmad KAMAL
Ambassador and Permanent Representative

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ANNEX

Statement by the Foreign Minister of Pakistan, issued on 25 May 1997

1. For 18 long years, the people of Afghanistan have gone through immense sufferings and have seen their country ravaged by war. As a neighbour and well-wisher, Pakistan has also been directly affected by the conflict in Afghanistan.

2. Our policy has been consistently aimed at the restoration of durable peace in Afghanistan. Towards this end, we have lent our support to all efforts aimed at promoting an intra-Afghan dialogue leading to the establishment of a broad-based Government. Our policy has always been and continues to be one of strict non-interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

3. Like most countries, the Government of Pakistan has been dealing with various regimes in Afghanistan by virtue of their control of Kabul. Despite the fact that the Rabbani regime has long lost its legitimacy and has been ousted from Kabul, it is a matter of regret that it continues to be recognized by the international community. This situation now needs to be remedied.

4. The Government of Pakistan has appreciated the landmark decision taken by the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) at the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of Foreign Ministers of OIC held at Jakarta in December 1996 (see A/51/774-S/1997/45, annex), when the representative of the Rabbani regime was ousted and the seat of Afghanistan kept vacant.

5. The recent developments in northern Afghanistan have shown that the Uzbek and Tajik commanders have risen in revolt against their leadership in favour of the Taliban. According to reports, after the fall of Shibergan, the joint forces of the Taliban and General Malik were able to enter Mazar-e-Sharif with little resistance or bloodshed. The Afghan Government now controls 26 provinces and genuinely comprises various ethnic groups in Afghanistan. We have seen that the Taliban advances since their emergence in 1994 have been popularly acclaimed by the Afghan people, who have made no secret of their desire to get rid of the tyrannical rule of the war in which the lives, honour and property of innocent citizens was not safe.

6. The Government of Pakistan has also noted with interest the statement of the Taliban leadership in which they have clearly stated that they would adhere strictly to a policy of neutrality and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries and would not allow any country to interfere in their internal affairs. The Taliban leadership has also attached high priority to the restoration of peace and stability in Afghanistan and has sought the assistance of the international community for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Afghanistan.

7. Pakistan has so far withheld recognition of the new Government in order to give time for the promotion of a broad-based Government through peaceful negotiation. I am happy to announce that the Government of Pakistan has now decided to accord formal recognition to the new Government of the Islamic State

of Afghanistan. We feel that the new Government fulfils all criteria for de jure recognition. It is now in effective control of most of the territory of Afghanistan and is representative of all ethnic groups in that country.

8. We look forward to a meaningful and cooperative relationship with the Government and the people of the Islamic State of Afghanistan in the interest of the peace and security of the region.

9. I would like to take this opportunity to express the hope that, following the recent developments in Afghanistan, the United Nations, OIC and other international organizations would also take the just decision of recognizing the new Government of the Islamic State of Afghanistan. We also hope that the international community will fulfil its responsibility for the reconstruction and economic development of the brotherly State of Afghanistan.